To-day and To-morrow

CHAPTER XI

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

IN Tautira, in Taiarapu generally, in Papeari, anything that lingers of the Polynesian tradition must be sought, and since, in conversation, one is always being asked of the natives of to-day, of the sort of life they and we together lead, and of the future, I propose from Tautira to write a little of it. Is there anything left of the people and customs that Hermann Melville saw and described in the Marquesas, Polynesians as were these ? Can one still find in Tahiti the atmosphere of the South Seas romance ? Can one, to be frank, throw off one's clothes, wed a lovely dusky maiden, and live for nothing on the fruits of the earth and the spoils of the sea ?